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OO RUEHROV
DE RUEHJM #0955 1421458
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
O 221458Z MAY 07
FM AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7637
INFO RUEHKK/ARAB ISRAELI COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RHEHNSC/WHITE HOUSE NSC PRIORITY

UNCLAS JERUSALEM 000955

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

NEA FOR FRONT OFFICE AND IPA, NSC FOR ABRAMS/WATERS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PREL](#) [KWBG](#) [IS](#) [PTER](#) [PGOV](#) [PINS](#) [ASEC](#)

SUBJECT: GAZA: HAMAS-FATAH TENSION SIMMERS, AS QASSAMS AND
ISRAELI AIRSTRIKES CONTINUE

REF: JERUSALEM 940 AND PREVIOUS

¶1. (SBU) Summary. Interfactional violence remained at a low level May 21-22, but Hamas-Fatah shootings left three injured, and deaths from injuries in previous fighting raised the toll from factional clashes to 56. 20 Qassam rockets struck Israel from 1400 (local) May 21 to 1600 May 22, killing one Israeli and injuring two in Sderot and causing substantial property damage. The IAF hit three metalblacksmith shops in Gaza City late May 21 and earlyMay 22 and heavily damaged an Executive Force HQ injuring five Palestinians. End summary.

Fational Shootings/Abductions

¶2. (SBU) While the ceasefire generally held, there were several violations May 21-22. At 1300 (local) May 22, Hamas military-wing gunmen abducted and shot Preventive Security (PSO) officer and Fatah activist Muhammad Shaldan in Gaza City. On May 21, unknown gunmen shot and injuredtwo Palestinians with Hamas ties in Khan Yunis. Hamas military wing member, a Fatah fighter, an a non-combatant Palestinian shot in factional cashes died of injuries previously sustained, raising the total number of Palestinian killed in Faah-Hamas fighting to 56.

Qassams and Israeli Airstrikes Continue

¶3. (SBU) 20 Qassam rockets struck Israe from 1400 (local) May 21 to 1600 May 22, killin one Israeli and injuring two (one seriously) in Sderot and causing substantial property damage to commercial buildings, vehicles and an industrial area. Rockets hit Sderot, Be'eri, Kfar Azza and south of Ashkelon. Hamas claimed 14 rocket launches and 17 mortar firings during this period, and the Popular Resistance Committees (PRCs) and PIJ both claimed launches at 2000 local when the Israeli woman was killed.

¶4. (SBU) Palestinian media and security contacts report the IAF destroyed three metal/blacksmith shops in Gaza City late May 21 and early May 22. Palestinian newspapers report these attacks injured at least five Palestinians. At 1330 local, an IAF strike heavily damaged an Executive Force HQ. A Hamas spokesman told Palestinian press that the Executive Force had evacuated the site beforehand and no injuries resulted.

Comment

¶5. (SBU) Hamas and Fatah are generally observing the interfactional ceasefire while Israeli airstrikes and

shelling are underway. However, recent violations demonstrate that Fatah-Hamas tension remains high and suggest the May 19 ceasefire may not last.

WALLES